

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7485

USIA WASHDC

INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

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SUBJECT MEDIA REACTION REPORT: MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV MEDIA OCT 7-9 CARRY EXTENSIVE NEWS REPORTS ON MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. EDITS, OFFICIAL STATEMENTS PREDICTABLY CONDEMN "ISRAELI AGGRESSION." MEDIA REPORTS INCLUDE WORLD REACTION TO CONFLICT AND U.S. INITIATIVE AT UN. END SUMMARY.

1. BELGRADE DAILIES BORBA AND POLITIKA, OCT 9, HEADLINE FRONT-PAGE REPORTS (MENA) OF HEAVY FIGHTING AND ARAB SUCCESSES IN "COUNTERATTACK" AGAINST ISRAELI FORCES. BOTH DAILIES CARRY PAGE-ONE REPORT (REUTERS) OF EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY BREZHNEV. UP TO THREE FULL PAGES OF NEWS COVERAGE OCT 8-9 INCLUDE REACTION FROM WORLD CAPITALS WITH DESPATCHES FROM AFP, UPI, AP, REUTERS, TANJUG, MENA, TASS.

2. YUGOSLAV PRESS OCT 8 REPORTED OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CONDEMNING "ISRAELI AGGRESSION." BORBA OCT 9 CARRIES STATEMENT BY FEDERAL STANDING COMMITTEE OF SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF WORKING PEOPLE OF YUGOSLAVIA SUPPORTING "JUST AND LEGITIMATE STRUGGLE OF EGYPT AND SYRIA."

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3. IN OCT 9 POLITIKA, NY CORR JURIJ GUSTINCIC STATES THAT US

IS NOW IN "DELICATE POSITION" OF SUPPORTING ISRAEL WITHOUT AROUSING ARAB ANGER. PRESENT COMPLEX SITUATION HAS CHANGED SINCE 1967, WRITES GUSTINCIC, AS RESULT OF "PETROLEUM ISSUE" AND FACTOR OF U.S.-USSR DETENTE. COMMENTARY SUGGESTS SUPER-POWERS MAY SEEK "FORCED SOLUTION" OF MID-EAST CONFLICT.

4. POLITIKA EDIT (OCT 8) BY DUSAN SIMIC ON "PRICE OF AGGRESSION" CITES ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS "KEY TO ANY MIDDLE EAST SOLUTION." EDIT RECALLS ISRAELI "ARRO-GANCE" TOWARD MEDIATION AND "PERMANENT AGGRESSION" AGAINST ARABS. BORBA'S OCT 8 EDIT BY BOGDAN DECERMIC CHARGES THAT "CULPRITS ARE ISRAELI IMPERIALISM AND ITS FOREIGN SPONSOR." IN SHARP TONE, EDIT CONTINUES: "ISRAELI AGGRESSION, LIKE CHILEAN PUTSCH, IS INTERNATIONAL REACTIONARY PLAN TO SUPPRESS PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE, AS WELL AS ATTACK AGAINST POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT."

5. BEGRADE DAILIES OCT 8 ALSO REPORTED U.S. INITIATIVE IN U.N. BORBA CARRIED TANJUG REPORT OF SENATOR FULBRIGHT'S STATEMENT ON MID-EAST SETTLEMENT, AND BRIEF SUMMARY OF MCCLOSKEY PRESS STATEMENTS, INCLUDING US VIEW OF CRISIS AS "VERY SERIOUS," AND CONTACTS MADE BY SECSTATE KISSINGER WITH INVOLVED PARTIES.
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